

to help Ukraine now and to defend ourselves in the future. Moscow and Beijing will only be deterred from aggression if they see concretely that military force cannot achieve their objectives and the cost of military aggression will be too high.

In the immediate term, we must ensure the Ukrainians can adequately defend themselves and impose costs on Russia that prove prohibitive. The administration brags about giving \$650 million to Ukraine last year, but the manner in which it did so deserves scrutiny.

When Putin built up forces along Ukraine's border last spring, the Biden administration delayed an arms assistance package, literally, for months.

A headline from last June read: "White House freezes Ukraine military package that includes lethal weapons."

Even as Putin began directly threatening Ukraine last fall, an assistance package languished for weeks at the White House before it was approved. This weekend, the administration rushed to announce another \$350 million in military assistance. For which weapons? On what timeline? And how will the weapons reach the brave Ukrainians who have lost ground?

So Congress must use its oversight tools to ensure we are providing Ukraine the weapons it needs as quickly as possible. The same goes for helping to shore up our NATO allies' defenses along the eastern flank. And we need to identify what shortfalls, red-tape, and limiting factors have slowed our assistance, so we are better prepared to help the next partner in need.

As I have warned repeatedly, we cannot afford to move at the speed of bureaucracy.

Beyond the immediate crisis in Ukraine, American Presidents, beginning with President Biden, must recommit our Nation to the longer-term challenges that we face. Seventy-two years ago, Harry Truman led the West in rebuffing the Communist assault in South Korea, as well as contesting Soviet domination over Europe.

America made sure NATO would not be a toothless political alliance, but rather a capable military fighting force. This meant sustained investment in American and allied military strength. Defense funding was the precondition for impactful diplomacy that kept the Cold War from going hot.

Now, it is this President's job to seriously meet the growing threats posed by Russia and China. The United States and our allies and partners must understand that the core of our competition with Russia and China is the military dimension.

President Biden's first budget proposed to actually cut defense spending in real terms. Congress had to take bipartisan action to beef up the NDAA to correct his error. Clearly, more investment is needed. Congress must keep strengthening defense capabilities as we work on appropriations.

But President Biden must lead by example. The President's next budget re-

quest must include at least a 5-percent increase in defense spending above inflation.

Russia and China have prioritized military modernization literally for decades.

They have invested in specific tools like long-range aerial defenses and hypersonic weapons that are designed to push the U.S. and our allies further away from the fight.

We are actually behind in this competition. We are actually behind. Hypersonic weapons, nuclear force modernization, power projection, global presence—these things cost money. It is a small price to pay for keeping security threats off of our shores. I have criticized NATO allies who failed to contribute fully to our collective security, but I am a strong supporter of the transatlantic alliance. I am encouraged by how our partners have responded, however belatedly, to the growing threat posed to our collective security.

For example, special praise to the courageous decision by Chancellor Scholz this weekend to seek an emergency appropriation of 100 billion euros for the German military. This effectively doubles Germany's military budget this year—doubles Germany's military budget this year.

He wants Germany to fulfill its pledge to spend 2 percent of GDP on defense. He wants to build liquefied natural gas terminals and make other energy investments to finally dial down Germany's dependence on Russia.

If our wary European friends are finally shaking off their slumber and getting serious, then certainly the United States of America can do the same.

President Biden must lead the charge and lead it now.

ABORTION

Mr. McCONNELL. Madam President, now, on an entirely different matter, with a cascade of major crises testing our country, Senate Democrats are prioritizing a show vote on mandating 9 months of abortion on demand across America.

Senate Democrats want to go on record supporting the radical and massively unpopular proposition that we should have functionally no restrictions on abortion whatsoever. Democrats already have the United States, one of just seven nations in the entire world that allows elective abortions after 20 weeks. This radical fringe policy places us in company like China and North Korea.

But now, Senate Democrats want to go even further than Chairman Xi and Kim Jong-Un. Ninety-one percent of Americans support some restrictions on abortion during the third trimester. The public overwhelmingly disagrees with Democrats' extreme obsession on this issue.

But yet again, our colleagues wish to demonstrate that the radical left fringe runs today's Democratic Party.

As the world prays for Ukraine and debates consequences for Putin, as American families contend with violent crime, open borders, and runaway inflation, Washington Democrats want to spend their time arguing for unlimited abortion on demand.

So I want to thank the majority leader for making it so clear where his party's priorities lie.

TRIBUTE TO JAMES M. INHOFE

Mr. McCONNELL. Madam President, now, on yet another matter, last week, our distinguished colleague, the senior Senator from Oklahoma, the ranking member of the Armed Services Committee, announced he will retire from the Senate at the end of this Congress. By this autumn, Senator JIM INHOFE will have been a stalwart champion for Oklahomans and a hugely impactful Senator for 28 years. He has led crucial committees, shaped major legislation, and helped keep the needs and concerns of middle America at the forefront of this institution and its work.

The fruits of Jim's labors are apparent across his beloved home State and our whole country. Most recently, atop the Armed Services Committee, he has been a remarkable advocate for fellow veterans, for today's servicemembers, and for the needs of our national security.

We will have much more to say about Senator INHOFE's storied service as we move through the remainder of this year and this Congress. But for now, I just want to congratulate our colleague, his wife Kay, and their 20 kids and grandkids on a well-earned retirement, to which they are now looking forward.

And I am very glad to have the Senator's wisdom and leadership to call upon for 10 more months, especially at a time such as this.

REMEMBERING RICHARD C. BLUM

Mr. McCONNELL. Now, on one final matter, I was saddened to hear this morning that Richard Blum, the husband of my friend and colleague Senator FEINSTEIN, has passed away following his fight with cancer.

For 30 years, Elaine and I have been privileged to cross paths with DIANNE and Dick in a number of ways, both professional and personal. It was always a great pleasure to break bread together, compare notes, and catch up.

Our colleague's very loving husband was, simply put, a fascinating person. He was highly successful, adventuresome, brave, and curious. For years, he moved seamlessly between such things as creating major value in the highest ranks of the private sector and studying Tibetan Buddhism. His passion for the Himalayas led him to befriend both the Dalai Lama and Sir Edmund Hillary. I understand he even made his own attempt on Mount Everest.

Dick's appetites for adventure, for philanthropy, for civic engagement,